

Movement: A Tool to Optimize Your Bladder Cancer Journey

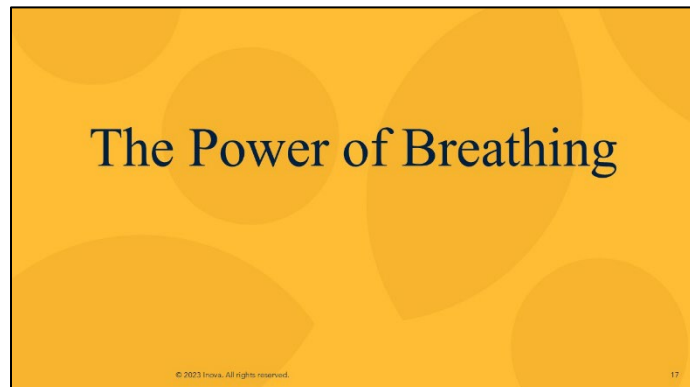
Guest Presenter:

Kirstie Pomaranski, NASM, CPT, CETI- CES



Kirstie Pomaranski:

All right, I'm going to finish tonight because we're almost at time and I just appreciate everybody's understanding as we've built with power outages and tech snafus to join me in this practice, it is taught by one of our yoga therapists at Life with Cancer. She teaches an intro to pelvic floor health and in this class she teaches you how to breathe properly so that you're actually connecting with the base of your core, which is your pelvic floor. When you're diaphragmatically breathing, it's getting you out of that fight or flight response. It's helping to change the pressure in your trunk, which helps with lymphatic drainage. It is one of the largest muscles in our body that helps connect our upper and lower extremity, and it's a wonderful thing to do to be able to drop into your breath and calm and center yourself. So I'll start this video right here.



Video: "Thank you. Welcome to Soundness with Sadie. This diaphragmatic breath is built up in a wave. It's three parts of our breath that when we've been under stress or after illness or injury can be damaged, particularly in times of fatigue. We don't make space for our full breath capacity. The best way to do that is actually to be on your back and Kirstie demonstrated in the slide with a chair, or maybe on the couch, just kicking your legs up on a couch. You could also just roll up a blanket or beach towels and I'll demonstrate how we can not only recreate our full breath capacity and the relaxation response that comes with it, retraining ourselves to know that we are in a place of calm and peace. And also to let our anatomy be supported.

So if you're sitting, try and back yourself all the way up, whether you're all the way back into a chair, whether you can actually sit back against the wall and maybe you put something under your bottom to get your hips into place. Natural curve of your low back supported. And if you're seated in that chair as

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well, you can set that blanket in there to help not pop your ribs forward, but hold your low back. Same with our neck. We want to feel our skull supported either by the back of the chair or the wall. And in doing so, giving yourself permission to stop thinking, to stop concerning with this.

I'll demonstrate on our back, and I do recommend this, I recommend this for something to do each day. Most helpful upon rising or right before sleep. Again, throwing your legs up on the chair or the couch or maybe just letting yourself use the roll of a blanket or bolster of some sort. But letting yourself soften all three corners of your tailbone onto the earth. Soften your skull into support. Whether it's back against the wall or down onto the earth. Whether you add another cushion or not, we don't really need our head higher, but we need our neck longer. So take a deep breath here. What is your deep breath? Can you relax just 10% more at shoulders or jaw at tailbone?

Because we aim to build the wave, the same wavelength that light travels on, sound reaches us upon, that same wave is built within us with breath, and it begins with our collarbone. As you inhale, can you expand that collarbone, not up and down through your shoulders, but wide across your heart. Hands there to help guide you. Exhale, release. This isn't a very long area for breath. We breathe in, but can you breathe out of this area completely? We hold on to breath here just in case. Breathe in. You've got to tell yourself for the next two minutes, there are no emergencies. I don't need to have somebody stop or go or ask for help. There's no wait, wait, wait. Just let go of this breath.

Breathe in the width of your collarbone. Breathe out. Allow your collarbone to empty. Our first area of breath. The second area of breath is in our ribs. As you breathe in, can you expand all the way into your hands? Your thumbs come under you, adjust your wrists at your side, but you let your hands be there and as you exhale, you use those hands to help push the air out. Loosen your grip, loosen your elbows and shoulders, hands there guiding you as you breathe in. And now as you breathe out, can your hands help to push the air out? This area gets harder as we get older unless we run properly. Some of us don't even run properly, or swim.

It's hard to inhale between each set of ribs as we find that breath capacity to open. And then use those muscles as we exhale to actually let go of that which no longer supports us. Breathe from collarbone to ribs, and empty letting it wash over you out of ribs and out of collarbone. Before we come to a third area of breath, thumbs point up into that soft spot where the ribs aren't connecting anymore. Index fingers towards your belly button. And as you inhale, they start to come apart. And as you exhale, we go with gravity, we just are done. What if we actually follow that naval to our spine? Inhale. That diaphragm's work right now is to draw air into the bottom of the lungs by pushing our organs up into the air now or out if we're seated.

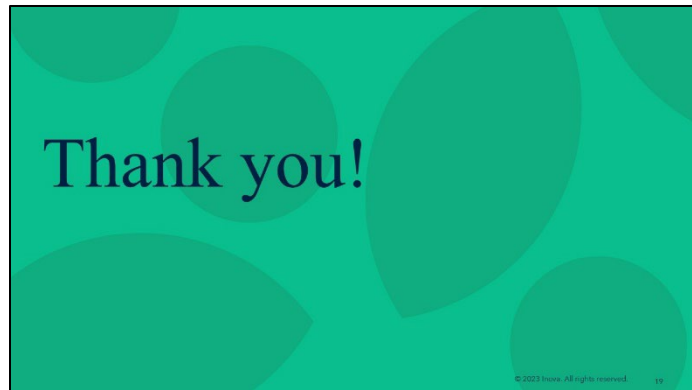
And as we exhale, help that diaphragm recoil by drawing the tone to all of the muscles, squeezing and holding them gently. Inhale, build the wave from collarbone to ribs to belly and exhale out of your belly and all of your ribs and out of your collarbone completely. Inhale from collarbone to ribs to belly, maybe even down into your pelvis. And again, trying not to move so much through our bottom, our hips, our thighs, even our low back. Just inhale into that torso. Can your jaw and tailbone relax and your nose and neck relax? Can your torso fill as you inhale to build the wave from collarbone to ribs to belly, and out of your belly and out of your ribs and out of your collarbone completely.

This is your full breath capacity. This offers a full relaxation response and more importantly, a retraining to draw yourself out of the stresses that you have been experiencing. In doing so, you can strengthen this to wear your breath in is four, maybe even five count. And your exhale is double that, that you take the time to actually release with each exhale. I appreciate your time. Thanks for joining me. I'm Sadie and continue to practice your three-part breath, your [foreign language 01:00:34] with gratitude. I see you."

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Kirstie Pomaranski:

So that is a lovely example of just some simple breathing exercises, taking it from collar to rib to belly and learning to do this so that you're incorporating this into your stress production. Maybe you don't have time for a yoga class or even walking, but if you can get into a practice of controlling your breathing and your stress response, that's the perfect place to start. So thank you so much for having me today. I really enjoyed sharing my experience, my practice, and how I work with my patients here at Life with Cancer. And I'd be happy to answer any questions that you might have.



Patricia Rios, BCAN:

Thank you Kirstie for that wonderful presentation. It was very thorough in providing practical tips in how we can incorporate movement in our daily life. Before I open the floor for Q&A, I just want to do a quick time check with you and see if we have a couple more minutes to-

Kirstie Pomaranski:

Okay.

Patricia Rios, BCAN:

Excellent. Perfect. We do have a couple questions in the chat. I also want to remind our participants that you can post your questions by using the Q&A box at the bottom of your screen. And so with that, I wanted to start with a question about the hope molecules. Well first thank you for introducing us to that concept. It's a very unique and new term, at least for me, and I think some of the participants on today's call. And I think the video did a great job explaining the benefits. So there's a two part question. One I wanted to ask. In terms of just benefits overall for bladder cancer patients of exercise movement, can you give us a list of those benefits and why we should really be incorporating that into our daily life?

Kirstie Pomaranski:

Yeah, it's really going to help you with just taking care of your emotional and physical state. And we know that going through a course of treatment can be really taxing. So trying to stay active, engaged, maintaining your muscle mass, your bone density, working on things that help you prevent falls, which can lead to other complications. This is about staying in the game and looking at it as a way of life and as a way of prescriptive medication that is going to help you manage the fatigue and some of the other aspects that come along with going through something.

Patricia Rios, BCAN:

Great. Thank you. And there was a question about if these are the hope molecules, if there's hope that they're eventually it can be turned into intravenous medicine.

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Kirstie Pomaranski:

It would be wonderful if they could bottle this and make it into a pill. But I think the most important takeaway is it's the beauty of our natural body's mechanisms and using that to the best of our own ability. It's free, it can be contacted at any point in time should we choose to. And I think that's really empowering and to take that message away that you have more power than you realize over your situation and to always remain hopeful. And these are some ways that you can do that.

Patricia Rios, BCAN:

Thank you. And then there was also a question about this concept of nitric oxide dump exercise. Have you heard of that?

Kirstie Pomaranski:

I don't believe that... that's not really in my area of expertise. I mean I'd be happy to do some further research on it, but maybe they could elaborate on where they heard that or what their sourcing would be.

Patricia Rios, BCAN:

Yeah, I did a little bit of search in it. It says that nitric oxide dump workouts are a series of exercises that can help increase nitric oxide levels in the body. So like squats, arm raises, circular arm swings, shoulder presses, which really were a lot of the things that you showed us today.

Kirstie Pomaranski:

Yeah, so I mean, again, the power of exercise, and I think we have been conditioned think that exercise has to be this torturous practice that is very strenuous and vigorous. But there is a balance to that, especially when you're going through a cancer diagnosis. It's learning to balance that we've got to push ourselves, we've got to be the best. We've got to elicit this nitric oxide dump. We want to push ourselves, but we want to help strengthen ourselves at the same time. And sometimes that means becoming a little bit more self-compassionate and exploring gentler movements.

And this practice of embodiment, learning to understand what our body is signaling and cueing to us. And remember staying in the game. This is not about pushing ourselves to the brink of exhaustion or dysfunction. It's about really empowering us, getting us stronger. And that can happen with consistency and flow, progression of strength training movements and doing a little bit more each day. And that would be my advice to anybody that's in this situation.

Patricia Rios, BCAN:

And what I loved about the exercises you demonstrated is that you are able to modify the exercise depending on where you are. It doesn't matter if you're a beginner or advanced, the exercise can be modified to fit your level and need. I think we often, there's so many terms out there and we use these interchangeably, exercise, physically active and now movement practice. Are there any differences in all of those as we are framing this concept of just living an active life and incorporating all these components of flexibility, strength training, aerobic exercise. How would you differentiate these terms? Are they one and the same? Should we think of it that way? Or is one preferred over the other?

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Kirstie Pomaranski:

Well, I think the basic takeaway is not to over complicate it, especially if you're just getting started. To try to remember how we can make this so easy, we can't say no to it. And sometimes it's going to what we know to be true. And that might be just simply getting outside for a walk. I would recommend that like any practice, when you're learning something new, you get the support and resources that access those support and resources that are available. And in many cases, these are free. You don't necessarily have to know all of this information or even be tasked with differentiating this right now. A lot of places like Life with Cancer have already kind of put that framework in place for you. And I think it's really about what's going to resonate with you in staying consistent and growing this natural interest in moving more, strengthening and not overcomplicating it.

Patricia Rios, BCAN:

Thank you, Kirstie. Well, we are out of time, so I want to thank you for joining us today and staying a couple minutes extra. I also want to thank our sponsors, Merck and UroGen for making this webinar possible. And of course our listeners for joining us today.

